



**Representative
Ruth Kagi**

Contact Me:

Mailing Address:

Representative Ruth Kagi
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Telephone: 360-786-7910

Toll Free Legislative Hotline:

1-800-562-6000

Hearing Impaired Hotline:

1-800-635-9993

E-mail: kagi_ru@leg.wa.gov

On the Web:

www.leg.wa.gov/kagi

Committees:

- Children & Family Services
(Chair)
- Appropriations
- Criminal Justice & Corrections

2003 *Session Report*



Dear Neighbors,

How should we balance the state budget?

That's the question we're wrestling with in the House of Representatives, and you as a citizen and taxpayer need to be informed – and heard from – when we make big decisions such as this.

Our state budget has a \$2.4 billion hole, and there are no easy solutions. Unlike the federal government, our state must balance its budget. We can't run a deficit. I support reforms to make state services more efficient, boost accountability and identify which services work and which don't. However, if every proposed efficiency passed, it still wouldn't come close to \$2.4 billion.

Inside this newsletter, I'll explain the problem and ask for your opinion. There's a short survey attached that I hope you will send back to me.

I believe an important part of my job representing you is having an open dialogue by keeping you informed and listening to your comments and ideas. Our democracy is based on citizen participation, and your opinion is important to me.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to represent the 32nd District. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Rep. Ruth Kagi

The state budget

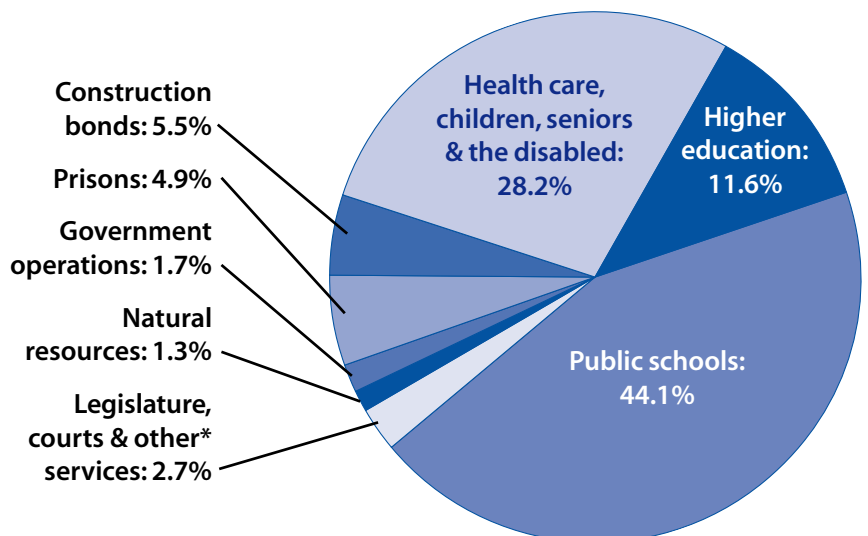
This session, our toughest challenge is balancing the state budget. We're facing a \$2.4 billion gap between revenue and expenses.

What's really in the budget?

Most state spending goes to education, medication or incarceration.

Public schools, colleges and universities take up about 55 percent of the budget. Health care and services to children and seniors take up about 22 percent, and prisons 5 percent. Funding for all other agencies and services make up the remaining 18 percent of the budget.

Governor Locke's proposed state budget



*Other includes Legislative, Judicial, Other Human Services, Transportation, Contributions to Retirement Systems, Other Education, and other appropriations.

Balancing the budget

It's difficult to grasp what a \$2.4 billion budget cut really means.

One way to size the gap is to understand its equivalent in entire state programs. In other words, what could you cut to balance the budget?

- Option 1: Eliminate all public universities and community colleges (2.9 billion)
- Option 2: Abolish state prisons and cut long-term care for the elderly and disabled (\$2.5 billion)
- Option 3: Stop medical assistance for the elderly, disabled and families with children in poverty (\$2.7 billion in state funds and \$5 billion in matching federal money)
- Option 4: Cut funds for the class size and teacher pay initiatives, end the Reading Corps and make other cuts to public schools (\$1.7 billion)

Some cuts in the governor's proposed budget

- \$336 million by eliminating health insurance for 60,000 childless adults
- \$212 million by not funding the teacher's raises in Initiative 732
- \$180 million in cuts to public universities and colleges
- \$135 million by eliminating the Medically Indigent Program
- \$35 million in cuts to nursing homes
- \$18 million in cuts to foster care
- \$7.2 million in cuts to the public schools' science and gifted programs

What happens next

The governor's proposed budget is just the first step.

We're looking at everything we do and will make significant cuts, but I don't think it's possible to balance the budget entirely by cuts without seriously hurting vulnerable people and damaging our institutions and communities.

It's important to me that I hear your opinion. If you had to balance the budget, what would you cut? What would you protect?



Comments:

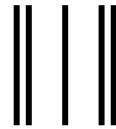
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- _____ K-12 education
- _____ Colleges & universities
- _____ Health care
- _____ Long-term care services for seniors
- _____ Services for the developmentally disabled
- _____ Services for children, families & mental health
- _____ Prisons
- _____ Bonds (construction projects)
- _____ * All other services

Would you support increasing revenues to avoid some of the proposed cuts? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- ☐ Sin taxes (alcohol and tobacco)
- ☐ Expanding gambling
- ☐ Sales tax
- ☐ Property tax
- ☐ B & O tax
- ☐ Close tax loopholes
- ☐ Income tax
- ☐ Other





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Rep. Ruth Kagi
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600



Town Hall Meeting • Sat., March 22
Shoreline - 10am
Shoreline Museum, 749 N. 175th St.
Lake Forest Park - 2pm
Third Place Books, 17171 Bothell Way NE

Working families
Many working people qualify for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, but never apply, so they don't get it. This tax credit is one of the most successful anti-poverty programs in our history. It's meant for working families, especially those with children. To see if you qualify, see this web page:
<http://www.irs.gov/individuals/page/0,,id=13712,00.html>

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Session Report
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Printed on recycled paper